

## The Message in Short of All The Supreme Buddhas

### සියලු බුදුවරුන්ගේ අනුශාසනය

All Buddhist doctrines focus on getting rid of suffering receiving wisdom about the reality of the world. Buddhism is like a powerful sun which lights our entire life. As much as we listen to this message and practice it, we are able to overcome sufferings in our lives developing wisdom. The Buddha realized and explained eternal reality to the world. Whether a Buddha appears or not, this truth is forever. We respect to the Buddha, because he discovered the truth by himself and explained it to the world with great compassion, but this reality doesn't belong even to him. The message that Gotama Buddha explained is the same to what all the Buddhas preached in the past. The Buddhas, who appear in the human world from generation to generation, realize the world's truth, discover it, become liberation practicing the path, explain it to the world kindly and pass away not to be reborn ending the long sansaric journey as well. There is a very significant stanza in the Dhammapada that summarizes all teachings in Buddhism. This verse is said to have been uttered by all Buddhas in the same words. That is;

*Sabba pàpassa akaranam kusalassa upasampadà,  
Sacitta pariyodapanam etam buddhanasàsanam.*

සබ්බපාපස්ස අකරණං කුසලස්ස උපසම්පදා,  
සචිත්ත පරියෝදපනං එතං බුද්ධානසාසනං.

All teachings in Buddhism are categorized into three. They are;

1. Not to do any evil
2. To cultivate good
3. To purify one's mind

The primary purpose of practicing these three advices is to overcome suffering and achieve real happiness. Whether we are happy or not is determined by how we maintain our mind. As much as we purify our mind from negative thoughts, we are on the path of liberation and happiness. These three steps guide us to purify the mind gradually.

The first advice of Buddhism is avoiding doing evils. Why Buddhism says us not to do any evil or sin. When we do any evil, our mind gets polluted. The polluted mind gives us sorrow and tears only, because it deprives us from peace of mind. If our mind is dirty with negative thoughts such as desire, hatred, jealousy and ignorance or delusion, we have neither real happiness nor peace in mind even though we may have a lot of facilities and comforts in our lives. Buddhism teaches that the collecting evil is collecting sorrow. We do all things in our life seeking happiness and peace of mind. Whatever we do in our life, the bottom line purpose is happiness. Why do we suffer further doing evil, if we have this understanding? We always try to get rid of doing evils based on how much knowledge we have of them. If we are on the path of

opposite of evil then we are on the path of opposite of sorrow, tear or sadness. Doing bad things in our life gives us a lot of disadvantages. Especially, we lose our good friends and we lose our success in our life such as mental and physical health, education and wealth. According to Buddhism the main roots of unwholesome are desire, anger and delusion. All kinds of evils are created by these three reasons. If we can reduce them as much as possible it means we are following the path that leads to the cessation of evils.

*'Mind is the forerunner of all evil states. Mind is chief; mind-made are they. If one speaks or acts with wicked mind, because of that, suffering follows one, even as the wheel follows the hoof of the draught-ox.'* (Dhammapada)

The second advice in Buddhism is doing good deeds. When we do good deeds such as helping others, practicing loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, equanimity, our mind becomes pure, calm, quiet, happy and peaceful. The main purpose of life is happiness. The main reason of happiness is pure mind with positive thoughts. The pure mind can gain happiness. The real way for happiness lies in the ability to overcome evils and develop good or meritorious deeds. The main roots of wholesomeness are generosity, loving kindness and intelligence or wisdom according to Buddhism.

*'Mind is the forerunner of all good states. Mind is chief; mind-made are they. If one speaks or acts with pure mind, because of that, happiness follows one, even as one's shadow the never leaves'.* (Dhammapada)

All kinds of good deeds in our life depend on these three. Mainly we do three meritorious deeds. They are;

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|---|-------|
| i. Generosity ( <i>Dana</i> )           | දාන   |
| ii. Morality or virtue ( <i>seela</i> ) | සීල   |
| iii. Meditation ( <i>Bhavana</i> )      | භාවනා |

The first act of merit Buddhism emphasizes is practicing generosity. Donating or giving our things, time, wealth and effort for the benefit of others is generosity. When we offer something to others, our mind is rich in merits, and mind is very high in peace. It means our mind is filled with happiness. The second merit is practicing morality. When we have good discipline in our speech and behavior, that is morality or virtues. Further, we have no sorrow or repentance, when we think our past activities. And we are honored and appreciated by our relatives and friends in the social life because of good discipline. The discipline in our behavior and speech causes us to develop (fix) confidence and friendship about us in the society. Especially, if we have very good discipline, we can face any person or society without fear and doubt. That is very important thing in the social life. Discipline or virtue also results happiness that is our final goal in life. The third meritorious deed is meditation. That also focuses to purify our mind from

negative thoughts such as anger, desire and delusion. Here we concentrate our mind according to good thoughts such as loving-kindness, breathing meditation. When we meditate again and again thinking positive thoughts, we can keep our mind for long time with happiness. It results in keeping our mind calm, quiet and peaceful, keeping away from negative thoughts. Buddhism says doing merit is decorating mind with happiness (චිත්ත පරික්ඛාරං). Also doing merits is collecting happiness (සුඛෝ පුඤ්ඤස්ස උච්චයෝ).

To purify one's mind is the third main advice of the supreme Buddha. Here we purify and cultivate our mind practicing meditation in both ways which are concentration (සමථ) and insight (විපස්සනා). In this level practicing meditation we develop mindfulness and wisdom, which mainly help for tranquility and comprehension. Before starting this level, we may have clear knowledge about the path that the Buddha explained to get rid of suffering. The close reason of suffering is desire, and the main reason of suffering is ignorance. We have big attachment which origins suffering because of unknowing of cause and effect (The Dependent Origination - පටිච්ච සමුප්පාදය). Here we have to receive an understanding of this process.

When we experience, we use one of six senses such as eyes, ear, nose, tongue, body or mind. The nature of this experience is it suddenly arises and ceases. Also, five aggregates arise and cease at once. Five aggregates are forms (රූප), feelings (වේදනා), perception (සඤ්ඤා), mental formations (සංඛාර) and consciousness (විඤ්ඤාණ). We get all kinds of experiences through our senses as the result of arising and ceasing of five aggregates. However, because of ignorance of this process, we think the experience remains after experience. That is why we desire or suffer about objects. If we understand this reality and avoid this misunderstanding, we are able to overcome suffering.

Having the knowledge of five aggregates, we should practice the path of liberation. Buddhism says this knowledge as 'Right Understanding- සම්මා දිට්ඨි'. When we have 'Right Understanding', we don't stop since we have to practice other seven steps too. Then we meet a path to follow 'The Noble Eightfold Path' (ආර්ය අෂ්ටාංගික මාර්ගය).

#### The Noble Eightfold Path –

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|----|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| 1. | Right Understanding | ( <i>Sammà Ditthi</i> )    | සම්මා දිට්ඨි  |
| 2. | Right Thoughts      | ( <i>Sammà samkappa</i> )  | සම්මා සංකප්ප  |
| 3. | Right Speech        | ( <i>Sammà Vācā</i> )      | සම්මා වාචා    |
| 4. | Right Action        | ( <i>Sammà kammantha</i> ) | සම්මා කම්මන්ත |
| 5. | Right Livelihood    | ( <i>Sammà àjiva</i> )     | සම්මා ආජීව    |
| 6. | Right Effort        | ( <i>Sammà Vàyāma</i> )    | සම්මා වායාම   |
| 7. | Right Mindfulness   | ( <i>Sammà sati</i> )      | සම්මා සති     |
| 8. | Right Concentration | ( <i>Sammà samādhi</i> )   | සම්මා සමාධි   |

These eight steps consist of three disciplines those are virtue, tranquility or concentration and wisdom. With the understanding of The Noble Eightfold Path, we form self-discipline in our speech and behavior. Discipline helps us to go forward in the path of purification practicing meditation. In purification of the mind, we mainly use two meditation techniques that are concentration or tranquility and insight. In the tranquility meditation, we keep our mind with a particular good thought. As a result of concentrated mind, we can live for a long time without suffering and stress, but it is not permanent and it can be changed. Here we practice and develop our awareness especially in mind and body. We practice to do all kinds of activities mindfully. Mindfulness is one of the important qualities that we have to develop for purification of our mind.

Concentration is not enough to eradicate defilements completely. That is why Buddhism says us to develop another step that is insight meditation for permanent happiness. Here, with the concentrated mind, we reflect all kinds of things that mental and physical on three characteristics of existence (ත්‍රිලක්ෂණ). They are;

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|------|--------------------|---------|
| i.   | impermanence,      | අනිත්‍ය |
| ii.  | unsatisfactoriness | දුක්ඛ   |
| iii. | selflessness       | අනාත්ම  |

We do reflection again and again on these three characteristics of existence (ත්‍රිලක්ෂණ). As a result of practicing this world reality, we develop wisdom with the knowledge of impermanence. Simultaneously, we develop five qualities which are confidence (සද්ධා), effort (විරිය), mindfulness (සති), concentration (සමාධි) and wisdom (පඤ්ඤා). As the result of practicing The Noble Eightfold Path with mindfulness and wisdom, we gradually reach to the real happiness increasing defilements.

**May the Triple Gem Bless you!**

තෙරුවන් සරණයි.

**May all beings be well happy and peaceful**

(සියලු සත්ත්වයෝ සුවපත් වෙත්වා)

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